

Street Newz



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WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

Do you ever wonder how street folk cope with illness?

How, for example, does a person recover from a simple illness like a cold or flu bug if they don't have a roof over their heads, a pot of nourishing soup on the stove, and a warm bed to sleep in? I've wondered this while nursing a cold, wrapped in warm blankets, with a mug of hot ginger and lemon tea. Sometimes the cold bug lingers for days and I move from warm bed to hot bath to comfortable chair, ingesting copious amounts of organic garlic or steaming my sinuses with rosemary or eucalyptus, thankful for the opportunity to take a break from the world and just rest.

Nearly 800,000 different people turn to a food bank for emergency food supplies each month, and agencies serviced by food banks serve 2.29 million meals a month. Thirty nine per cent of food recipients are children, and estimates suggest that almost sixty per cent of households accessing food banks are families with children.

But how do homeless folk - never really sure where their next meal is coming from or whether they'll find shelter from the rain - how do they cope with illness?

I suspect that sometimes street folk don't survive simple illnesses like colds and flus. In 2003 Reverend Al performed over 50 funerals at the Open Door - downtown Victoria's drop-in centre. As long as we maintain an economic structure that insists on a percentage of unemployment, we're going to have homelessness. And as long as we have homelessness, we're going to be charged with seeing them, and thinking about them, and wondering about their existence.

Recently I've had an opportunity to consider the plight of homeless folk from another challenging perspective.

Colliding with a car door while cycling is commonly referred to as a "door prize." It's described, by many cyclists, as their greatest fear. Since collecting my door

prize, on May 4th of this year, it has become one of mine. I was lucky ... extremely lucky. My fate could have been decided quite differently had I not been following a good health and preventive medicine regimen during the past several years. I engage with yoga on a regular basis, and I see a massage therapist regularly to reduce stress and maintain a healthy chi energy balance. I consume organic, and vegan, food. I'm relatively healthy - physically and spiritually. And, most importantly, I always wear that all important piece of cycling equipment - the brain bucket.

Since the collision my preferred choice of treatment, for the muscle

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and back pain, has been massage therapy and chiropractic adjustments, combined with small amounts of daily yoga. I'm healing, slowly and surely, and in the meantime I'm learning a lot about how healing happens. Every day is different - how much I'm able to accomplish is determined by the way my

body happens to feel at any given moment. I appreciate each day a little bit more, and I approach life from a slightly different perspective.

RED, THE FORT STREET KNITTER

Because I'm visiting the massage therapy clinic more frequently, I see Red more often. Red occupies a corner near the clinic - he's a friendly fellow who's often panhandling and knitting or reading. Red and I have a few things in common - we both knit, we both like to read, and we're both recovering from an injury. I'm fortunate enough to have a bit of cash up front to pay for treatments, and entertain thoughts of eventual reimbursement from ICBC.

Red's lucky if he can find a warm and dry place to sleep.

In addition to his other challenges, Red is suffering with a shoulder injury resulting from a disagreement of some sort. He does have access to a medical clinic, and he's thankful for that. Unlike me, though, Red's not able to access the services RMT's, Chiropractors, or other alternative healers, can provide.

After Red's shoulder has been set, what else can an MD do for him aside from prescribe painkillers? Without cash, how is he expected to access naturopathic remedies, or massage, or acupuncture, or physiotherapy, or whatever alternative form of healing he might choose? What will happen to him - does anyone care?

Red and I have talked about the importance of good nutrition for healing. One day, when his shoulder was particularly painful, I brought him a veggie burger from Green Cuisine. I wasn't sure how to feel when he took the 'burger' part and insisted on sharing the bun and its contents with his friend across the street. I wanted help Red's healing, and he wanted to look after his buddy (who then offered me a Canadian flag for my bike). I rode away carrying an memory of a simple street rule of survival - share what you've got now because you can't be sure where you'll be tomorrow, or half an hour from now.

I'm no doctor, but it seems that the best way to treat illness and dis-ease is to avoid it altogether. Being encouraged, and able, to maintain healthy bodies with a nutritious diet, appropriate exercise, reduced stress, and adequate rest will reduce the harmful impacts of unavoidable circumstances. I'm certain my 'door-prize' incident would have been much more serious had I been

living a different lifestyle. I'm also certain that Red's healing will be aided if he has access to a healthy diet.

QUANTITY VS. QUALITY OF FOOD

I've heard it said that it's tough to starve in Victoria. We're fortunate to live in a very caring and compassionate community. Many people devote countless hours and invest enormous energy to provide services for those less fortunate. But what quality of food are the homeless able to access?

We know that a vegetarian diet encourages better health, and will feed significantly more people than a meat-centred diet. Tremendous amounts of consumable water and grain are used to produce small amounts of animal protein. Peter Uvin, in The State of World Hunger, reported in 1994 that 6.3 billion people could be fed on an almost purely vegetarian diet, compared with 4.2 billion if 15% of calories were from animal products, or only 3.2 billion if we count on 25% of calories from animal products.

In addition to using excessive resources unnecessarily, factory farming is cruel. John Robbins, author of 1987's Diet for a New America, lived with an ice-cream cone shaped swimming pool in his backyard when he chose to decline his assumed place as CEO of the Baskin-Robbins empire. "The purveyors of the Great American Food Machine," he wrote, "don't want you to know how the animals have lived whose flesh, milk and eggs end up in your body. They also don't want you to know the health consequences of consuming the products of such a system, nor do they want you to know its environmental impact. Because they know only too well that if word got out the resultant public outcry would shake the foundations of their industry" (Robbins, xv).

Robbins refers to "thousands of impeccably conducted modern research studies" whose findings have concluded that an excess of meats, dairy products, and eggs, previously "thought to be the foundations of good eating habits," are actually "responsible for the epidemics of heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis, and many other diseases of our time" (Robbins, xv).

Not only is a meat-centred diet unhealthy, particularly with the recently introduced mad cow and avian flu diseases, it's also heavily resource dependent. Many people can choose to remove animal products from their diets - but street folk, dependent on food banks and soup kitchens, can't afford the luxury of choice.

A SHORT HISTORY OF FOOD BANKS

Food banks are a relatively new phenomenon in Canada. According to Graham Riches, in Food Banks and the Welfare Crisis, food banks emerged when the People's Food Commission commented, "in its national report on Canada's food system published in 1980, one year before the first food bank was established in Edmonton ... on the need for emergency food" (Riches, 14).

According to the Canadian Association of Food Banks, we now have over 635 food banks across the country, and an additional 2000 agencies helping hungry people nationwide. Nearly 800,000 different people turn to a food bank for emergency food supplies each month, and agencies serviced by food banks serve 2.29 million meals a month. Thirty nine per cent of food recipients are children, and estimates suggest that almost sixty per cent of households accessing food banks are families with children.

Whereas food banks began as a short-term emergency solution, they've evolved to become an essential community service. Interestingly, the establishment of Canada's food banks was not a government initiated project. "From speaking with food bank directors across the country," Riches wrote, "it is clear that the major institutions influencing

the start-up of food banks were NGO's, churches, labour and the corporate sector" (Riches, 18).

Neither did food banks emerge in response to concerns about food waste, although conservation is a part of their philosophy. "It was apparently the need rather than the surplus that drove the food bank organizers" (Riches, 19). Food banks emerged in response to "inadequate social assistance and OAS benefits" (Riches, 14).

The existence of food banks begs a very important question: Have we become complacent about poverty and hunger issues because of the existence of food banks? Are we less passionately concerned about the disease of poverty because we are supporting a band-aid solution that temporarily relieves hunger, but doesn't address the root cause of poverty and homelessness?

TWO SIDES OF THE SAME FOOD STAMP

Standing in stark contrast to the dire lack of food resources, and the tragedy of food waste, is the reality of excessive food consumption and waste. June's Common Ground magazine began an examination of "The Deadly Spins" with a look at gluttony and the food industry. "There is such a superabundance of food available," wrote author Geoff Olson, "along with an endless repetition of advertising for it, that we rarely think of gluttony outside a secular context, or as a culturally problematic state of mind, like greed and anger. Yet, with calorie-laden fast-food guaranteeing sumo-sized bodies, the North American diet has never been worse" (Olson, 6).

Olson is concerned about the 21,000 annual Canadian deaths and the \$3.1 billion annual expenditures that result from obesity and physical inactivity. "Over the next decade," Olson wrote, "at least three million Canadians are expected to develop Type 2 diabetes, a lifestyle disease preventable by good nutrition and physical exercise. In the US, obesity is now second only to smoking as a cause of mortality" (Olson, 6).

People with the power to choose from among various food options are challenged to discern the truth from the contradictory messages they receive. According to Olson, the "desire for food - especially bad food - is pushed at every available opportunity by advertisers" while, at the same time, the multi-billion-dollar diet industry promotes a "thin-is-in fashion scene" that is equally as dangerous (Common Ground, 7).

THE RENAISSANCE OF WHOLISTIC MEDICINE

Just as food banks provide a cure, rather than a prevention, for the disease of poverty, Canada's health system appears to focus on treating, rather than preventing, illness.

Why?

The importance of maintaining health in order to avoid illness is not a new phenomenon - Herophilies, in 300 B.C.E. (before the current era) is attributed with the following:

"When Health is absent
Wisdom cannot reveal itself,
Art cannot become manifest,
Strength cannot be exerted,
Wealth is useless and
Reason is powerless."

Much of modern science can be traced to ancient Greece. The word 'healing', in Greek, means 'to make whole.'

Wholistic healers perceive the body and spirit together, as an integrally and intricately connected unit.

In the early-sixteenth century Francis Bacon (1561-1626) introduced the Novum Organum, and profoundly influenced the philosophy of science and medicine, and the way humans think about themselves and the world around them. In order to understand nature, according to Bacon, it is necessary to examine her parts rather than comprehending her as a complete and functional unit.

"The human understanding," Bacon wrote, "is of its own nature prone to abstractions and gives a substance and reality to things which are fleeting. But to resolve nature into abstractions is less to our purpose than to dissect her into parts ... There remains but one course for the recovery of a sound and healthy condition - namely, that the entire work of the understanding be commenced afresh, and the mind itself be from the very outset not left to take its own course, but guided at every step; and the business be done as if by machinery."

With Bacon began an examination of the parts, rather than a comprehension of the whole. Wholistic healers have persevered through the centuries, however, and they continue to advocate for preventive maintenance which offers the combined body/spirit entity an opportunity to strive for a perpetually balanced and healthy state, and a chance to avoid illness and all its dire consequences altogether.



Modern alternative health care providers are often challenged to prove that their methods are legitimate - even though their practices span many millennia.

A Registered Massage Therapists (RMT) 2003/2004 document states that "the practice of massage is woven throughout history into the Egyptian, Chinese, Indian, Greek, Roman, French, Swedish, and English cultures. Even Hippocrates, who is often considered the 'father of western medicine', referenced massages in his 'terrain-cures' in 460 BCE.

Chinese and other cultures' herbal healing traditions enjoy similar longevity, with multitudes of healers and healed to sing the herbal praises, yet neither their acceptance nor their encouragement is endorsed in Canada's Health Act.

Times are, however, slowly changing. Thanks to NASA technology, chiropractors - also victims of much misunderstanding - now have access to equipment that provides a clear visual image of spinal health. I own computer generated images showing that, after a month of chiro, massage, and yoga, my spinal health has improved significantly. With a bit of luck, alternative healers will soon be offered a place in Canada's publicly funded and universally available health care system.

PREVENTIONS OR CURES FOR DIS-EASE

Armine Yalnizyan's review of the interestingly under-reported Romanow Commission report found that "the public is indeed willing to spend more for health care, but they want to make sure more money buys real improvement." What do we mean by improvement? According to Yalnizyan's interpretation of the national public-inspired report, "improvement may come in the form of increased access to pharmatherapy, *or it may result in a re-examination of the ways we interact with our bodies and those we consider health 'professionals'* (emphasis added).

It makes sense to maintain a healthy body, just like it makes sense for a car owner to check the oil, rotate the tires, and keep the fluids topped up, or for a cyclist to clean and lube the chain and replace worn brake pads. Neglect can cause great inconvenience, not to mention tremendous expense. If the body is a vehicle that houses a spirit or soul, then it is that soul or spirit's responsibility to check the maintenance schedule

on the body and make the necessary adjustments.

Taking the car or bike in for regular maintenance, however, costs money. Taking care of one's body also requires money. If Canadians wish to continue to claim ownership of one of the world's best health systems, it's going to require some investment. Most Canadians, I think, are proud to contribute to a public health system that is accessible to all, that provides employment for compassionate and devoted healers. Our challenge is to hire local, regional, and national representatives who will appropriately manage the public purse, and distribute funds effectively.

"An expanded public purse," Armine wrote, "provides undeniable opportunities for some suppliers of health-related goods and services to make big money. It is very easy to spend a great deal more on new technology, drugs, infrastructure or salaries. It is far more difficult to prove whether that is the best buy for improving peoples' health in specific and Canada's public health care system in general."

The Romanow Report reflects Canadians' desire for a health system with "some form of accountability" from all levels of government, to "assure quality service and value for money ... Accountability is the cure for what is ailing public health care, and the way to ensure a strong, secure system is there when we need it."

HEALTHY BODY, HEALTHY PLANET

Like healers who function outside of Health Canada's officially identified and funded arena, environmental scientists don't always receive the recognition they deserve. With every passing day, however, the warnings about the detrimental effects of pollution and its resultant global climate change are increasingly difficult to ignore. Many people are beginning to understand that maintaining a healthy planet is a fundamentally important component for personal dis-ease management.

Most environmentalists work tirelessly to raise awareness about the real and potential dangers of increased reliance on fossil fuels, pesticides, and genetically engineered organisms, but they often lack the resources and/or political clout necessary to actually implement healthy replacements. Fortunately, many are able to make personal lifestyle choices that reflect their commitment to a healthy planet - they buy organically grown produce, limit consumption of animal products, choose cycling, walking, or other low-impact transit options - they reduce, reuse, and recycle.

David Suzuki is one proponent of a healthy planet who is difficult to ignore. He has relayed a consistent message spanning decades. Way back in 1989, David reported that "a kilogram of vegetables and fruits contains an average of sixty-four micrograms of PCBs" (Suzuki, 64). These chemicals accumulate in various tissues - including women's mammary glands. One of Suzuki's concerns is that "from conception to birth, a fetus is exposed to a barrage of chemicals never encountered in the past evolution of our species" (Suzuki, 64).

Are menstruating women provided with enough information to make informed choices about whether and/or when it's a good idea to bring new life into this world? Do they consider the complex social and physical environment, including the environmental degradation and poverty, that their child will encounter?

There's a lot that women can do to prepare themselves for the miracle of childbirth, but there's a lot that remains unknown.

"Thanks to evolution," Suzuki wrote, "we have an intricate nervous system that informs us of immediate threats to our bodies through headaches, fever, pain, and nausea. But we do not have biological warning devices for radiation or chemicals that attack our genes and cells in more subtle, less direct ways or over long intervals. As we add more and more chemicals and radioactivity into our surroundings, we only find out about their deleterious effects when enough victims provide undeniable evidence" (Suzuki, 67).

David's warnings were heard as early as 1962 when Rachel Carson explained, in Silent Spring, that "for the first time in the history of the world, every human being is now subjected to contact with dangerous chemicals, from the moment of conception until death" (Carson, 16). Rachel asked us to consider "who has made the decision that sets in motion these chains of poisonings, this ever-widening wave of death that spreads out, like ripples when a pebble is dropped into a still pond?" (Carson, 127).

Rachel and David, and countless other concerned citizens, want us to consider the effects of our activities on this planet. "We can no longer afford to ignore ecological principles in everything we do," David wrote. "Before any new product or process is allowed on the market, its possible long-term environmental consequences must be seriously considered. Those costs must be an integral part of the market price of any new product ... think about disposable batteries. As they accumulate in garbage dumps, their nickel and cadmium contents leak into the ground. Yet battery manufacturers have no liability or responsibility for heavy metal contamination" (Suzuki, 68).

CONSUMER POWER

We all make choices that impact the health of our planet, and subsequently the health of our bodies. Some of us have more choices than others. Imagine how it might feel to live without a home, to depend on the benevolence of a community to feed and house you. Poverty and

homelessness denies millions of people, internationally, the choice of deciding what sort of agricultural practices they want to support, and what type of food they want to put into their bodies. A system of health that doesn't address root causes denies us all an opportunity to prevent disease and reduce risk of injury.



Statistics Canada, in their 2003 Supplement to Health Reports, informs us that "people with a strong self-concept are more likely to be active, and they also tend to engage in self-care and avoid risky behaviour."

Imagine the strong self-concept we might all enjoy if we're able to make healthy choices for our bodies, and for the planet. As individuals we could combine a healthy diet, a favourable exercise routine, and a quiet engagement with spiritual reflection to encourage good health. As a collective we could choose to promote a physical environment that includes clean air, soil, and water - and request the same from our elected representatives. A healthy planet requires cooperation - we can and must work together to reverse the damaging effects of the industrial revolution - for the good health of all.

Story written by Janine Bandcroft, B.A., B.Ed

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TOP TEN REASONS TO BUY ORGANIC

1. Protect Future Generations: *"We have not inherited the Earth from our fathers, we are borrowing it from our children."* - Lester Brown

The average child receives more exposure than an adult to at least eight widely used cancer-causing pesticides in food. The food choices you make now will impact your child's health in the future.

2. Prevent Soil Erosion: The Soil Conservation Service estimates that more than 3 billion tons of top soil are eroded from the United States' croplands each year. That means soil is eroding seven times faster than it is being built up naturally. Soil is the foundation of the food chain in organic farming. But in conventional farming the soil is used more as a medium for plants in a vertical position so they can be chemically fertilized. As a result American farms are suffering from the worst soil erosion in history.

3. Protect Water Quality: Water makes up two-thirds of our body mass and covers three-fourths of the planet. Despite it's importance, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates pesticides - some cancer causing - contaminate the groundwater in 38 states, polluting the primary source of drinking water for more than half the country's population.

4. Save Energy: American farms have changed drastically in the last three generations, from family-based small businesses dependent on human energy to large-scale factory farms highly dependent on fossil fuels. Modern farming uses more petroleum than any other single industry, consuming 12 percent of the country's total energy supply. More energy is now used to produce synthetic fertilizers than to till, cultivate and harvest all the crops in the United States. Organic farming is still mainly based on labor-intensive practices such as weeding by hand and using green manures and crop covers rather than synthetic fertilizers to build up the soil. Organic produce also tends to travel fewer miles from field to table.

5. Keep chemicals off your plate: Many pesticides approved for use by the EPA were registered long before extensive research linking these chemicals to cancer and other diseases had been established. Now the EPA considers that 60 percent of all herbicides, 90 percent of all fungicides and 30 percent of all insecticides are carcinogenic. A 1987 National Academy of Sciences report estimated that pesticides might cause an extra 1.4 million cancer cases among Americans over their lifetimes. The bottom line is that pesticides are poisons designed to kill living organisms, and can also be harmful to humans. In addition to cancer, pesticides are implicated in birth defects, nerve damage and genetic mutation.

6. Protect farm worker health: A National Cancer Institute study found that farmers exposed to herbicides had a six times greater risk than non-farmers of contracting cancer. In California, reported pesticide poisonings among farm workers have risen an average of 14 percent a year since 1973, and doubled between 1975 and 1985. Field workers suffer the highest rates of occupational illness in the state. Farm worker health also is a serious problem in developing nations, where pesticide use can be poorly regulated. An estimated 1 million people are poisoned annually by pesticides.

7. Help small farmers: Although more and more large-scale farms are making the conversion to organic practices, most organic farms are small independently owned family farms of less than 100 acres. It's estimated that the United States has lost more than 650,000 family farms in the past decade. And with the U.S. Department of Agriculture predicting that half half of this country's farm production will come from 1 percent of farms by the year 2000, organic farming could be one of the few survival tactics left for family farms.

8. Support a true economy: Although organic foods might seem more expensive than conventional foods, conventional food prices not reflect hidden costs borne by taxpayers, including nearly \$74 billion in federal subsidies in 1988. Other hidden costs include pesticide regulation and testing, hazardous waste disposal and cleanup and environmental damage. Author Gary Null says "If... you add in the real environmental and social costs of irrigation to a head of lettuce, its price can range between \$2 and \$3."

9. Promote biodiversity: Mono-cropping is the practice of planting large plots of land with the same crop year after year. While this approach tripled farm production between 1950 and 1970, the lack of natural diversity of plant life has left the soil lacking in natural minerals and nutrients. To replace the nutrients, chemical fertilizers are used, often in increasing amounts. Single crops are also much more susceptible to pests, making farmers more reliant on pesticides. Despite a tenfold increase in the use of pesticides between 1947 and 1974, crop losses due to insects have doubled - partly because some insects have become genetically resistant to certain pesticides.

10. Taste better flavor: There's a good reason why many chefs use organic foods in their recipes - they taste better! Organic farming starts with the nourishment of the soil which eventually leads to the nourishment of the plant and, ultimately our palates.

Written by Sylvia Tawse, public relations manager for the Organic Trade Association. Tawse and her husband own an organic farm in Boulder, Colorado.

participating in democracy

On June 21st, the Together Against Poverty Society - and friends - organized a van and drove people from some of Victoria’s shelters and drop-in centres to the advance polls.

I asked the voters two questions - “when did you last vote?”, and “what are the important issues?”

I asked the TAPS volunteers and friends - “why are you helping these people vote today?”

Dan MacDonald

“I voted in the last election”

“Honesty and integrity along with rapid change. Electoral reform that actually is reform. Representation that isn’t so Ottawa based.

Eliminating poverty and corporate welfare, redistributing wealth.



Dean Fortin

“It’s important to help those who feel disadvantaged to vote. So many decisions are made that effect them, and it’s important that they help to make those decisions.”



Carrie-Anne Billyard

“I voted in the last federal election”

“Making police responsible for their actions. People who hold a C56 medical marijuana exemption, are often raided—we’re ill people with multiple stresses.”



Larry Wartel

“The greater the vote, the more social justice we’ll have. The greater the vote among poor people, the more social justice there’ll be for poor people.”

Tom Adams

“I voted in the last federal election.”

“Affordable housing and better health care, including shorter waiting lists, access to acupuncture and other alternative medical options.”



Sean Kennedy

“I’ve never voted before.”

“Maybe they’ll help the homeless and get rid of poverty.”



letters to the editor

Being There

There are many things in this world I will never understand.

I really have no idea how somebody who has just been cut off welfare is supposed to suddenly have enough money for bus fare to get to and from job interviews or work.

Or how the very same person is supposed to also have enough money for lunches without spending a night in jail for stealing a jar of peanut butter. Or how the exact same person is expected to “dress for success” or even do laundry when they need to dig through garbage cans for returnable containers so that they can buy a day-old loaf of bread to go with the peanut butter they stole.

How does such a person rent a room when the landlord asks, “What would you do if they cut you off welfare?” Would the government that contributed to this suffering ever repent of its sins and see the light?

Would somebody hire an articulate and thoughtful person to write a report about dealing with poverty in a fair way? Who would read such a report? Somebody who found it digging through rubbish for returnable containers?

It is a strange and sad day we live in: nobody wants to take

responsibility for dealing fairly with poverty and therefore the marginalized are unable to provide sufficient prosperity for themselves and their families. This increases poverty and marginalization. Dealing with poverty, if it is to be done fairly, must include active participation by a wide spectrum of our society. It must include governments, religious, and non-profit groups. It must include cooperation between all sectors.

Equally important, it must include participation and cooperation by those who live in poverty because it is necessarily a shared responsibility if efforts are to be truly effective and helpful.

Robin Kingsley, Victoria



THE EARTH CHARTER

<http://www.earthcharter.org>

PREAMBLE

We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.

Earth, Our Home

Humanity is part of a vast evolving universe. Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life. The forces of nature make existence a demanding and uncertain adventure, but Earth has provided the conditions essential to life's evolution. The resilience of the community of life and the well-being of humanity depend upon preserving a healthy biosphere with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters, and clean air. The global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust.

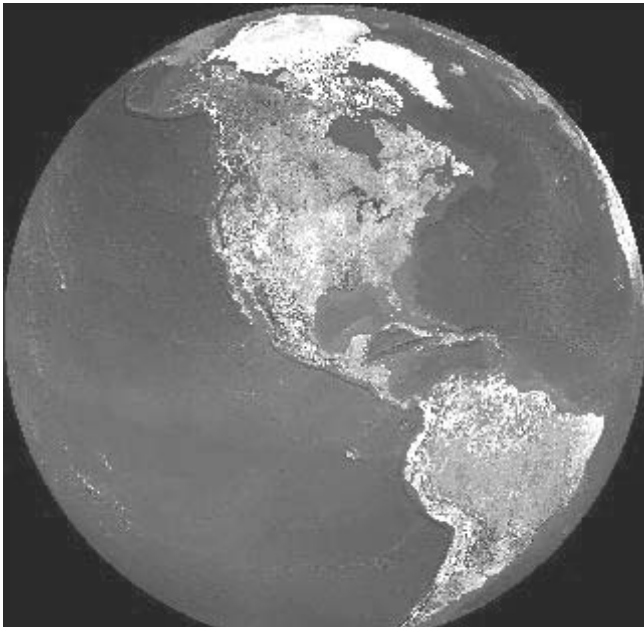
The Global Situation

The dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation, the depletion of resources, and a massive extinction of species. Communities are being undermined. The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening. Injustice, poverty, ignorance, and violent conflict are widespread and the cause of great suffering. An

unprecedented rise in human population has overburdened ecological and social systems. The foundations of global security are threatened. These trends are perilous-but not inevitable.

The Challenges Ahead

The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life. Fundamental changes are needed in our values, institutions, and ways of living. We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more. We have the knowledge and technology to provide for all and to reduce our impacts on the environment. The emergence of a global civil society is creating new opportunities to build a democratic and humane world. Our environmental, economic, political, social, and spiritual challenges are interconnected, and together we can forge inclusive solutions. Universal Responsibility



Earth image thanks to
<http://www.fourmilab.ch/earthview/vplanet.html>

To realize these aspirations, we must decide to live with a sense of universal responsibility, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities. We are at once citizens of different nations and of one world in which the local and global are linked. Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world. The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature.

We urgently need a shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community. Therefore, together in hope we affirm the following interdependent principles for a sustainable way of life as a common standard by which the conduct of all individuals, organizations, businesses, governments, and transnational institutions is to be guided and assessed.

CFUV Campus Community Radio provides alternative music and spoken word programming 24 hours a day. For more information - <http://cfuv.uvic.ca>



Resisting Two Year Limits on Welfare in British Columbia

Written by Marge Reitsma-Street and Bruce Wallace¹
Re-printed from Canadian Review of Social Policy, 2004

The *Employment and Assistance Act* and its companion the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities* were passed in June 2002 by the Liberal government in B.C.

Eligibility, benefits, and access to advocacy and appeals were significantly reduced. Documented proof of being “truly in need” increased for welfare claimants as did surveillance of assets and penalties for inaccurate reporting or non compliance with employment plans. Total benefits were cut by as much as 40% per month, including a 100% claw back of all employment earnings and child support, unless deemed disabled. Parents whose youngest child was three years old

were re-categorized as ‘temporary assistance’ cases and needed to seek employment. Post-secondary students were no longer eligible to apply for welfare unless disabled but able to attend full-time studies. Offices and services were closed in dozens of communities. The Income Assistance Advisory Board was abolished and the right to appeal denial or reduction of benefits limited. Other policies and program changes meant most advocacy groups, women’s centres, housing registries, and community law

clinics that offer services to those on low income had their provincial funding reduced in 2002, and eliminated by 2004. Legal aid was virtually unavailable for poverty law or tenant complaints as of January 2002.

The most drastic and qualitatively different changes in B.C.’s welfare new law and regulations were four types of time limits.² First, there is the “*three week wait*” for welfare after making an official application during which claimants must continue to seek employment including those caring for children. Second there is the “*two-year independence test*” meaning applicants, usually youth, must demonstrate they have worked for 840 hours or earned at least \$7,000 in each of two consecutive years before applying, unless disabled, fleeing abuse or caring for children. Third, there is the “*two years out of five*” eligibility for welfare. Employable persons are to be cut off all assistance after two years of assistance, unless exemptions are permitted by officials, while employable parents who have claimed benefits for 24 months and whose youngest is older than three years are to have monthly benefits reduced by at least \$100. Finally, there is the *lifetime ban on access to welfare for those convicted of welfare fraud*. Ontario had passed a lifetime ban but the current Liberal government rescinded the ban following

concerted public pressure. Unique to British Columbia, however, is its two year limit to benefits. It is this time limit that became the concentrated focus of public debate and resistance.

Opposition to the new welfare era

Dissent against the various regressive and problematic provisions of the new bills began immediately. Social justice, faith, unions, and some professional and academic groups registered their opposition in the mainstream and alternative media, and provided the two opposition legislative members (out of 77 elected members) with critiques of key provisions for legislative debates.³ The opposition also read into the Hansard record the names of persons and groups who

registered opposition to the bills. Although all the provisions came into effect in September 2002, the two year time limit, named “the ticking welfare clock” by its opponents, started retroactively as of April 1, 2002.

There were numerous sessions organized by established social justice groups and new coalitions to analyze the provisions and build oppositional connections across the provinces during 2002 and 2003. Local and provincial research projects were initiated to monitor how the policy changes and funding cuts, including those to welfare, were affecting people and communities. Results were systemically distributed using internet and personal links.⁴ Some of the opposition was dramatic and personal, when for instance the Ministry of Attorney General fired the entire Legal Services Society Board in February 2002 for refusing to implement the elimination of legal aid for poverty law. Conversely, the Law Society of BC proposed a motion to censure the Ministry of Attorney General. A similar motion of

censure was passed in May 2002 by the B.C. Association of Social Workers against the Minister of Human Resources, a former social worker.

One emphasis of the protests during the fall of 2002 and subsequent spring was opposition to the process initiated by the Ministry of Human Resources to re-assess the eligibility of claims of 62,000 persons living with disabilities. Disability benefits accounts for one-third of the Ministry’s budget; those eligible receive modestly higher monthly benefits than regular claimants. The Ministry had been instructed by the larger Liberal government agenda to cut costs. Savings were predicted if a reduced number of people were assessed as being eligible for the higher “continuous” monthly rates for unlimited years or re-classified for the time limited lower benefits of those “expected to work.” The massive re-assessment exercise was costly, difficult, and systematically opposed by 400 disability groups across the province. It also was ineffective: in 2002 there were 56,254 persons with disabilities eligible; two years later there were more—62,808 clients in Jan 2004. The Office of the Auditor General examined the conduct of the review, finding only 46 cases



were actually closed. Of the \$5 million needed to pay for the review, 60% was used to pay assessors and doctors to complete the full eligibility documentation required by the government.⁵

A subtle aspect of opposition to the laws and their limits was the use of cumbersome, administrative processes by employees, claimants and advocates to help people find employment as intended by the new laws or to justify the legal exemptions. There was a surge in innovative approaches to “stop the clock ticking” by exempting people from the welfare time limits through for example registration in short-term training courses. Most significant was the re-classification of many persons into the new administrative category of “persons with persistent and multiple barriers” or PPMB including serious but not permanent health limitations or unemployability due to effects of relationship abuse. There were no persons classified as such in 2002; two years later, 14,733 clients had a PPMB designation, meaning they were temporarily excused from time limits and eligible for limited training benefits.

The ‘Campaign’ to Abolish the Two Year Time Limit

Opposition to the new laws intensified by the fall of 2003, with a focus on the time limits effective April 1, 2004. Estimate of persons facing the cutoffs ranged from 14,000 to 27,000, without appeal, recourse, or alternatives.⁶ There were several significant features of the efforts of the opposition.

First, organizations, large and small, concentrated on lobbying the provincial government and their individual MLAs to rescind or abolish the two year rule. This singular abolitionist focus minimized prolonged debates on non-competing alternatives, such as longer, but still arbitrary limits of three or five years.⁷

Second, the opposition included formal, public challenges and official motions passed by Boards of Directors and elected officials. There was for instance the constitutional challenge to the two-year time limit on eligibility for social assistance on the grounds launched Oct 20, 2003 by the Poverty and Human Rights Project in Vancouver, the British Columbia Public Interest Advocacy Centre and various community groups⁸ on the basis that it violates basic human rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in international treaties that Canada has ratified.

It was the motion approved by the City of Vancouver, however, that galvanized a whole new level of protest. A group of elected reform councillors passed a motion November 6, 2003 that stated the City would “actively and immediately lobby the province to rescind the law imposing welfare time limits, and provide Vancouver community groups with regular updates on their efforts.”⁹ In addition, the councillors approved a motion to “send a letter to other municipal councils in BC outlining its concerns and urging that other councils lobby the province to stop welfare time limits.”

Rapid electronic distribution of this approved motion throughout the activist community and official letters sent by Vancouver city staff to officials in every municipality across the province prompted other cities, including those of the City of Victoria and the 14 municipalities represented by the Capital Regional District to pass similar motions. Governing bodies of professional groups such as the Deans and Directors of Canadian Schools of Social Work, the B.C. Association of Social Work, and various school boards approved similar motions to rescind the time limits, as did social planning councils, housing societies, faith groups, and voluntary agencies.

The third feature of the campaign was the remarkable absence of coordinated strategies or attempts to organize coalitions, with the exception of the singular focus on rescinding the two year limit. Instead, journalists reported there were “many levels protest[ing] impending welfare cutoff” and not just anti-poverty groups.¹⁰ People and groups used diverse tactics and relevant arguments to register their protest of the time limits grounded in their own experiences and knowledge. Solidarity Coalitions in Victoria and Prince George for example used rallies and put

posters with pictures of the ticking welfare clock on telephone polls to reach their audience. A group of 62 academics associated with the University of Victoria used research arguments about the ineffectiveness and illegality of time limits in their protest letter to the premier and Minister of Human Resources.

The City of Vancouver argued the province had promised to minimize negative impacts of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games on low income people. Elected councils across the province were concerned about the impact of hundreds, maybe thousands of persons being cut off, downloading responsibility for their survival on the cities and towns.

By way of contrast, the Diocesan Council of the Anglican Church, in a letter sent to 60 Anglican churches for debate and decision, reasoned the welfare limits had to be rescinded because of the “profoundly moral” nature of income assistance policies and that the true character of a society is measured “by the ways we support, encourage and care for the least fortunate.”¹¹ Similar letters were read from pulpits in the United Church, while multifaith action groups urged individuals and groups to write letters to the Premier and Minister of Human Resources requesting the limits be abolished on compassionate grounds. Others joined the 12 hour multifaith vigil on the Legislature steps on February 25th followed by a night sleeping on the streets.¹² Throughout December and January of 2004, the City of Victoria, the Capital Regional District, other municipalities, social planning councils, school boards, and large and small voluntary organization used different arguments and local evidence to pass motions to rescind the limits on welfare.

Lastly, there was sustained visible and invisible linking undertaken by many people and groups, especially during the months of November 2003 to February 2004. The intent was to spread information about the law and the welfare limits. The aim was also to initiate strategies about how policy could be interpreted and messages represented. This linking and taking the initiative are related, but not the same as coordinating activities or coalition building, of which there was little in the campaign. The internet was used to spread factual information immediately after a motion was passed, or when an informative analysis or argument was made. Activists, academics, faith groups, and concerned citizens used personal emails, telephone and small group meetings to debate and select strategies, and to practice them. For instance, there was significant behind the scenes work to coach participants of a January 30, 2004 Victoria press conference that attracted all local print, radio and T.V. media, and national coverage. This press conference was timed to put pressure on the Minister of Human Resources to respond as promised by the end of January to requests for specific information on how many people would be affected by the time limits.

Outcome and Commentary

Did the campaign work? Yes and no. This linked, diverse, multi level, uncoordinated but singularly focused campaign to abolish the arbitrary two year limits on welfare did capture a measure of positive, albeit fleeting public support. It was the government who had to defend the limits and only a few allies came forward to defend publically the limits.¹³ The arbitrariness and inhumaneness of the two year limit captured the public’s compassion and imagination. No one knew who would be cut off, nor what would happen to the anticipated hundreds or thousands who could be “on the streets” without recourse or appeal. Supporters of the campaign to rescind were helped by a real worry that no one claimed responsibility for those cut-off welfare. Others were annoyed with the unwillingness of provincial politicians to give information about the impact of the cuts on those most affected—the claimants and their communities.

The time limits, however, have not been abolished. Neither the law nor the regulations on time limits have changed. Yet, there is a significant public policy clarification on exemptions. In 2002 and 2003 the Ministry noted eighteen or 20 exemptions to the cutoffs.¹⁴ As of February 6, there was a new

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exemption. Exemption 25 included “people who have an employment plan, are complying with their plan, are actively looking for work, and have not been successful in finding employment.”¹⁵ The Ministry argued this exemption was not new, but a clarification of existing policy and thus there had been no cause for alarm. Opponents of the welfare limits, however, claimed a small victory as all the exemptions, especially the 25th one, included virtually all persons who are eligible for welfare. Even the mainstream media stated in front-page news items on February 7, 2004 that the “province backs off plan for dramatic cuts to welfare.”¹⁶

Although significant, the victory is small. The public and government debates continue to focus on the importance of employment, not its adequacy nor relevance to a person’s situation. Parenting and caregiving for the sick are not considered work. Without minimal support and maximum surveillance, it will be simple to cut people off welfare for not complying with what the Ministry calls the ‘legally binding employment plan.’ In addition, the welfare rates are even more inadequate than before the 2002 cuts pushing people further into debt every month after paying for food and shelter.¹⁷

Most important, far more people are denied assistance, than cut off. With the new laws it is increasingly difficult to become eligible for welfare because of the three week wait, the two year independence tests, the assets tests, and the higher expectations for documented proof of eligibility. In 2002, 214,516 persons were eligible for assistance, already a significant decrease from a high of 371,427 in 1995, the year before the *Canada Assistance Plan* was abolished and the new *B.C. Benefits* law was proclaimed. Nine years later, only 166, 479 persons were eligible to claim benefits in January 2004 even though unemployment rates, especially for youth or those with less than university education have not decreased in B.C. while costs of living have increased.

The B.C. Ministry of Human Resources continues to argue for a policy narrative that instructs citizens to believe that regardless of access to adequate employment, childcare, or training, “a job is better than welfare and that people who are able to work should work.”¹⁸ To enforce this narrative, punitive measures such as time limits - with exemptions - are required to lead Canada in “a fundamental shift in the culture surrounding income assistance from one of entitlement to one with a renewed sense of personal responsibility”.¹⁹

The opposition to B.C.’s new welfare era and the campaign to abolish the two year welfare limits appeared to have fostered thoughtful public debate on the meaning of welfare limits, encouraged different people to become allies, and secured an important new exemption in welfare policy that put money into the hands of many who needed it for survival. More campaigns are required, however, to reclaim citizens’ entitlement to human dignity and rights to economic security. From our analysis of this campaign, there may be value in determined, diverse and yet linked efforts to uncover and abolish the inhumane, ineffective and arbitrary aspects of public policies.

Sources:

1. Marge Reitsma-Street, PhD, is Professor in Studies in Policy and Practice, Faculty of Human and Social Development, University of Victoria and Bruce Wallace, MSW, is Research Director of Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group.

2. Section 36 of the Employment and Assistance Act states that the lieutenant Govern-in-Council *may* make regulations for providing income assistance on a time-limited basis, and *may* make reductions in incomes after time periods. But it Regulations 26 and 27 that states assistance is provided for 24 out of 60 months, and how much monthly benefits *must* be reduced, and which months *must be excluded* from the count towards the maximum of 24 months.

3.For example”A Policy analysis of the proposed B.C. Employment and Assistance Law” by M. Reitsma-Street, paper published electronically and in alternative media when Bill 26 and 27 introduced. See www.uvic.ca/spp/publications. April 1, 2003. See Debates of the Legislative Assembly, 3rd Session, 37th Parliament, Volume 6, starting April 16th, 2002.

4.Seth Klein and Andrea Long *A Bad time to be Poor: An Analysis of BC’s Welfare Policies*. CCPA-BC and SPARC -BC, Vancouver. [Www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca). Various Welfare Fact Sheets written by the Public Legal Education Program and distribution on www.povnet.org. See also six month reports by Community Reconstruction Project beginning June 2003 by Community Social Planning Council, Victoria, www.communitycouncil.ca and Lesley Moore “Income Assistance after the Cuts” Vancouver: End Legislated Poverty, August 28, 2002.

5.Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia Wayne Strelieoff, “Review of Eligibility for Disability Assistance” Feb. 2004, www.bcauditor.com/PUBS/2003-04/Report6/Audit1.htm downloaded March 1, 2004.

6. Seth Klein “Leaked numbers sound alarm on welfare time limits” Canadian Centre for Policy Alternative (BC), Opinion piece. October 30, 2003.

7.T. Mathiesen, *The Politics of Abolition*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget and Martin Robertson, 1974, p.15.

8. “Community groups prepare for constitutional challenge to welfare cut-off” BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre, www.bcpiac.com downloaded November 14, 2003; Sheilagh Day “Are welfare time limits constitutional?” *BC Commentary*, Vol 7(1), 2004, p. 4-5.

9. Motion on Reductions and Cutoffs of Income Assistance Benefits moved by Councillor Woodsworth sent in email to ewoods@vcn.bc.ca, and other activists, from WE*ACT Women Elders in Action l October 24, 2003

10. Sheila Potter “Many levels protest impending welfare cutoff” Weekend Edition, Victoria News, January 30, 2004, p. 3

11. Letter approved December 11, 2003 by the Diocese Council of the Anglican Church in the Vancouver Island Region, and received in a January 18, 2004 email from the Rev. Canon Dr. Harold Munn, Rector, The Church of St. John the Divine.

12. February 25 was selected for the vigil and night on the streets as it was Ash Wednesday and the last date cheques would go out to eligible persons before the April 1st

13. T. Gabel, J. Clemens, & S. LeRoy, “The reason for welfare time limits: They work” *Vancouver Sun*, November 15, 2003, p. C7.

14. Murray Coell, “Giving British Columbians every chance to work” *Times Colonist*, October 23, 2003, p. A11.

15.Ministry of Human Resources in British Columbia, “Time Limit Policy to Protect people in need” News release, February 6, 2004. [Www.news.gov.bc.ca/nrm_new_releases/2004MHR0001-000080.htm](http://www.news.gov.bc.ca/nrm_new_releases/2004MHR0001-000080.htm) Downloaded Feb. 6, 2004

16.Lindsay Kines, “Province backs off plan for dramatic cuts to welfare” *The Vancouver Sun*, February 7, 2004 p. A1; see also Judith Lavoie “Welfare extension sees needy retain benefits” in *Times Colonist*, Feb. 7, 2004, P. B4.

17.”Cost of Eating in BC-Low income families are more desperate than ever”, October 2003. Vancouver Costal Health Authority, www.dietitians.ca/news/media.html summarized by one of authors Shefali Raja in Oct. 22, 2003 email distributed to social planning councils.

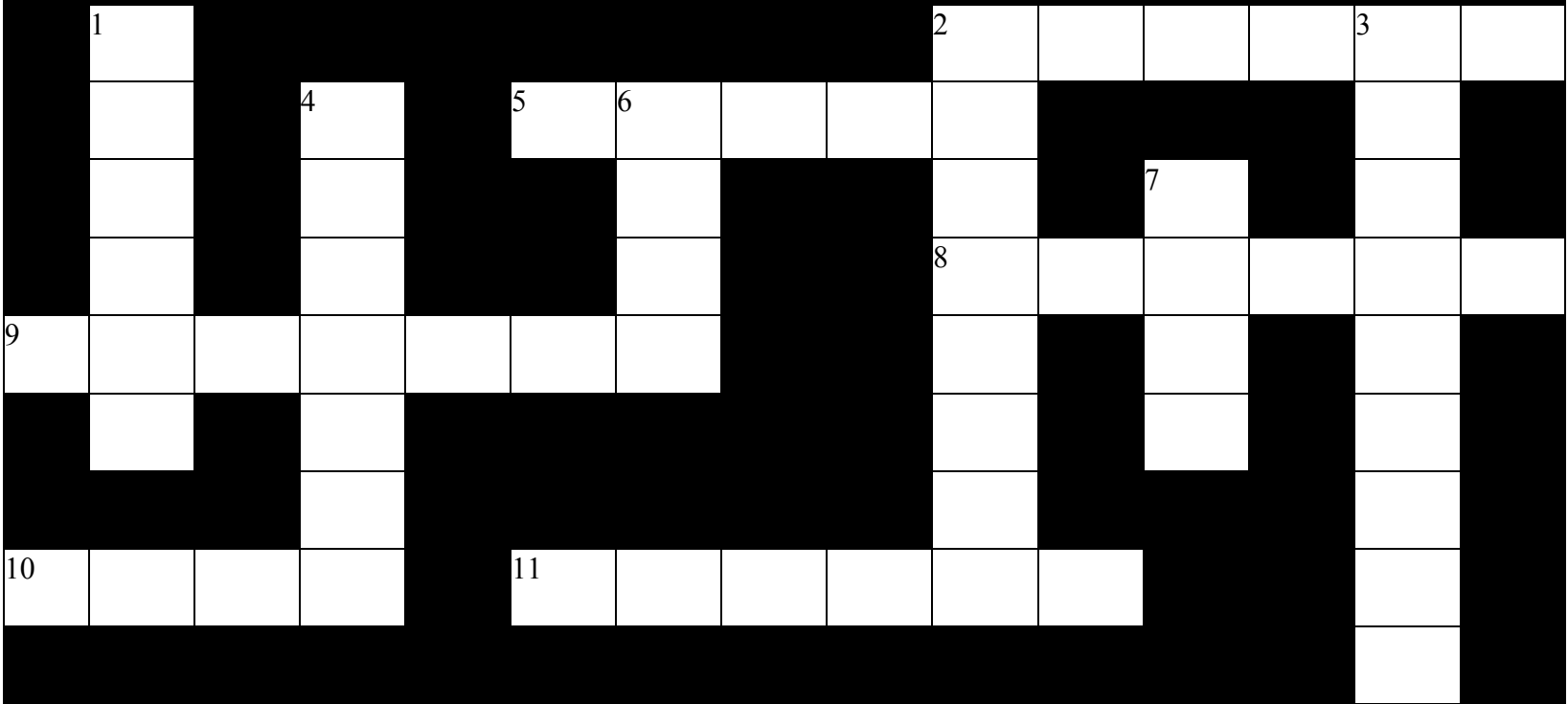
18.Murray Coell, “Giving British Columbians every chance to work” *Times Colonist*, October 23, 2003, p. A11.

“How long would authority ... exist, if not for the willingness of the masses to become soldiers, policemen, jailers, and hangmen?”

Emma Goldman

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

This month’s theme ... the Sixties



Across

2. This Canadian historical author wrote a 1966 collection of essays - The Cool Crazy Committed World of the Sixties.

5. This 'dirty rotten' actor was charter member of the 1960's anti-establishment "Swinging Set," dubbed Britain's "New Aristocracy."

8. This section of New York City was frequented by musicians and song writers and occupied by publishers of popular music starting in about 1885 and extending into the 1960's.

9. This man was Vice President of the US from 1953-1960, and was the 37th President of the US. What was his middle name?

10. Poet Ed ??? studied at the University of Illinois and Black Mountain College in North Carolina. His quest for place is reflected in his poem titled "The Cosmology of Finding Your Place."

11. Rachel Carson's 1962 classic, ?????? Spring, is described as "a courageous revelation of the forces that modern man has brought into being in his ruthless war on life, an eloquent protest in behalf of the unity of all nature, a protest in behalf of life."

Down

1. Funk & Wagnall’s Standard College Dictionary, 1973, defined these people as "one of a group of people, typically young people, whose strikingly unconventional dress and behavior, marked especially by the use of psychedelic drugs, express withdrawal from or nonparticipation in conventional, middle-class life and indifference to its values."

2. A strategist from which Washington-based group said, according to Buckminster Fuller in I Seem to be a Verb, "there could have been pauses between each new category of military targets, to give Hanoi a chance to decide whether the price was worth the candle, but we erred in increasing the pressure so slowly that they could accommodate to each new level of pain fairly easily."

3. Founded in 1921, the Council on Foreign ????????? headquarters has been a gathering place for some of the most influential policy makers in the U.S.: secretaries of state, CIA directors, newspaper editors, and corporate executives. GE was/is a major funder - in 1957-58 this organization published "Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy," a report by Henry Kissinger.

4. An American historian (1912-89), she won the Pulitzer Prize for history two times for The Guns of August (1962) and Stilwell and the American Experience in China (1971).

6. In 1972 Gloria Steinem helped found Ms. Magazine, and in the early 80's wrote a nationwide bestseller titled Outrageous ??? and Everyday Rebellions.

7. Poet ??? Waldman was raised in Greenwich Village, she co-founded the literary magazine "Angel Hair," and was director of the St. Mark's Poetry project from 1968-1978.



BC SEA

BC SUSTAINABLE ENERGY ASSOCIATION

Do you want to see more use of wind, solar, biodiesel, and other kinds of sustainable energy in British Columbia?

Do you hear alarm bells ringing with regard to the floods, forest fires, droughts and heat waves that are being caused by global climate change, which we know is caused primarily by our use of fossil fuels?

Do you want to see more use of sustainable energy in B.C., as an alternative to the increasing use of oil, gas, coal, and the latest menace, the Site C megahydro project in the Peace River country?

If your answers are 'yes", we invite you to join the B.C. Sustainable Energy Association (BC SEA). We're new, we're ambitious, and we'd love to have your support and participation.

Our vision is one in which all of B.C.'s energy comes from clean, renewable, efficient sources, respecting the integrity of nature, and the needs of humans and other species, and their habitat, both now and in future generations.

The potential for wind, tidal, microhydro, solar hot water, and other kinds of sustainable energy in B.C. is enormous. In order to develop this potential, we need a much stronger voice for sustainable energy, and much greater public awareness. If we work together, we can do it.

For more details, please explore our website at <http://www.bcsea.org>.

We want to become one of the small groups of thoughtful, committed citizens that changes the world. Will you join us?

BC SEA Honorary Directors

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Bill Eggertson, Exec Director, Cdn Association for Renewable Energies
Briony Penn, Author and broadcaster, Salt Spring Island.
Deb Abbey, Founder and CEO of Real Assets, www.realassets.ca
Eric Smiley, Project Leader, Photovoltaics, BCIT Technology Centre
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Bo Martin, Sierra Club of BC, Victoria
Kees Schaddalee, WISE Energy Cooperative, Victoria
Randyn Seibold, Activist-entrepreneur, Victoria
Johnny Thiessen, Environmental entrepreneur, Victoria



“Hunger is a form of torture that takes away your ability to think, to perform normal physical actions, to be a rational human being.

Anuradha Mittal

The future belongs to those who give the next generation reasons to hope.
Teilhard de Chardin

Society of Living Intravenous Drugusers

Information? Times?	Movies?	Help?	Exchange
Advocacy?	Fun?	Peer Support?	Referrals?

Wednesdays (except welfare day)
7:00—9:00 pm
926 View St.

\$3 bus fare reimbursed if sign in before 7:30 - payout at 9:00 pm

A Downtown Vision Realized

I hadn’t seen Dan for twenty years – shortly before 9/11 he had given up on Victoria and moved east. He felt then the Downtown had stagnated. Apart from the new tourist accommodations near the Inner Harbour, the Downtown had stopped growing. Now, back for a visit, he was amazed at the vitality he saw, particularly north of Fisgard. “How had this happened?” We sat down for coffee and I told him a story about growth of a better place we call Victoria.

Back then, I began, many others had shared his perception of decline. The business community was particularly concerned with what some saw as intransigence. The citizen initiated “Downtown Victoria 2020” Conferences focused wider attention on the situation – a situation rooted in perceptions of insecurity; financial, in that development was a bad investment, and physical, in that it wasn’t safe to be downtown. With these beliefs nothing much could happen.

The popular view held that the image presented by our homeless street population was behind these beliefs. Certainly, of all possible factors, this was most visible – and who were they anyway? Like “untouchables,” redundant to the economy. The belief in “separate but equal” was an illusion. The very term “homeless” clearly separated those with homes from those without. They were not equal. Homelessness was a consequence of disenfranchisement. It was not a case of their behaviour but one of ours toward them. Oru assumptions about the street people had to change. Like it or not, Victoria was their town also, inclusion was essential, eviction was not an option. What did they want? What were we willing to sacrifice?

Housing was the first step and with the help of local religious groups, Cool Aid, and new federal rent guarantee funding, small developments of no more than ten units each were possible. Some of the new tenants were then able to register for Union supported Trades Training. Others served as “Street Guardians,” watching out for vandalism and the like. Following Vancouver’s success, a safe injection site was created and with the help of Street Nurses, addiction was treated as a health issue. Trafficking was greatly reduced.

All these measures led many of the ex-homeless into legitimate membership in the economy. The strangers were allowed to buy-in and share their talents. In the light of this progress and the new construction work, the perception of insecurity was beginning to die. More self interests were being served. Meanwhile, recognition of other conditions that would generate a vital Downtown was developing:

- A strong productive economy, including exports
- Mixed uses, including several primary uses – opportunities for all
- A variety of residences associated with local work and earning capacity
- A mixture of old and new buildings on streets where people felt safe, and
- Lots of people, including tourists, “interacting.”

A prevailing mantra had favoured more residential. Eventually it was realized this form of development, rather than being a cause of vitality, should be a result of it. Otherwise, unattached to new productive work it would only be equivalent to suburban bedroom communities. For example, the large condominium development in Harris Green certainly contributed to retail activity, but, separated from street presence, this development added little real street vitality. What was needed was not just more customers, but more people with street presence, productively involved in the economy.

Economically, Downtown was a one-act pony. Office workers helped the lunch trade but Retail was the only primary use – and it wasn’t enough to be sustainable- hence the decline. Jane Jacobs, in her studies of cities, learned conclusively that for

vitality to continue, a city needed more than two primary uses. A “good image” did not revitalize a city – only explicit economic growth – no substitutes. Non socially discriminating capital must be available, but only when security existed. In all the successes, there was a pattern of continuing growth. New work was being added to old, often spinoffs from old work needs, creating wider diversity and new divisions of labour, often replacing imports to become exports.

In terms of other primary uses, what could this mean for Downtown Victoria?

The region was rife with creativity – artists, artisans, and superb crafts people, generally with insufficient public exposure and often isolated from their peers. The idea for a non-retail based community of creative people began to take form. The mixed industrial area west of Douglas extending north to Bay was still fairly dormant but had development potential for rehabilitation and new construction. Guidelines called for small developments, the ground floor storefront space reserved for a diversity of studios, galleries, and workshops below two or three stories of simple loe income residential.

Small craft furniture and technology manufacturing initiatives were accommodated. A local plastic recycler began remanufacturing products rather than shipping the waster off-island. Small art and music schools found space. All this development became financially possible with the help of start-up grants, rent guarantee programs, and initial property tax concessions.

The free Government Street trolley line giving five minute service between the Inner Harbour and the large Bay Street parking facility brought many tourist patrons to this burgeoning “Art Colony.”

Meanwhile, in the rest of Downtown, safety had arrived, the Library had a new home, Camosun College had an adult studies program, the Concert Hall was finally a reality, and our Music Festivals were hailed internationally. The waterfront walk, closely related to user services, was complete.

So, Dan, the dynamic life you now see on downtown streets didn’t happen overnight, but like the 2004 presidential campaign, it was a time of great change. As Jacob had written; “Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody only because an only when they are created by everyone” – and that’s what worked.

Roger W. Smeeth, a semi-retired architect, author of “An Architect’s Journey,” has lived in Victoria since 1964.



“When I feed the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist.”
Dom Helder Camara

Food Banks and Meals

Thanks to Food Not Bombs for providing the following information - please send any corrections and/or additions to streetnewz@cedco.bc.ca:

9-10 CLUB (ST. ANDREW'S SOUP KITCHEN)
740 View St. Victoria, B.C. V8W 1J8 phone: 388-5571
8 am - 10am seven days a week
Church-run club providing daily meals on a drop-in basis.

ANAWIM COMPANION SOCIETY
973 Caledonia Street Victoria B.C. V8T 1E7 phone: 382-0283
Mon, Tues, Thurs 10am - 5 pm, Weds, Fri 10am–8pm, Sat 10am– 4pm
Laundry, showers, meals, clothing, limited housing spaces.

COMMUNITY FOOD BANK
4-697 Goldstream Avenue, Victoria, B.C., V9B 2X2 phone: 474-4443
Tues, Weds: 10am – 3pm, Closed last week of month

FOOD NOT BOMBS
Phone: 383-5144, Box 1940 Website: http://resist.ca/~fnb-victoria
Free vegetarian food serving Saturdays at 3:00 pm at Douglas & Yates
Bring clean margarine, tofu containers for bowls, bags for produce.
Food Not Bombs is a collectively run (non-hierarchical) food kitchen.

FREE COMMUNITY LUNCH
Esquimalt United Church Hall, Lyall St., just past Admirals Rd.
Tuesdays and Thursdays - 12 noon – 1:15 pm

FRUIT AND VEGGIE BOX
C/o Blanshard Community Centre phone: 388-7696
James Bay Community Project phone: 388-7844
WorkLink Employment Society phone: 478-9525
Victoria Native Friendship Centre phone: 384-3211
Wholesale prices, various size boxes. Pay first, pick up following wk.

JAMES BAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
140 Oswego Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 2B1 phone: 389-1470
for James Bay residents
1. Substantial dinner - \$5.75 seniors and guests, \$6.00 others
Tues and Thurs evenings 5pm – 7pm
2. Community dinner 5:30 pm mid-month: adults \$4.00, children \$2.00 advance tickets
3. School cafeteria open to public 11:45am - 1pm. School rush from 12-12:20 pm
Hot daily special featured – adults \$2.75, children \$2.50

MEALS ON WHEELS
9751-3rd st. Sidney, B.C., V8L 3A5 phone: 655-9222
For residents of Greater Victoria who, because of age, disability or illness, are unable to prepare an adequate meal for themselves, have inadequate cooking facilities, have no one to prepare meals, or have health and social needs.
Referrals from doctors, health & Social Services agencies, concerned friends, family, or personal requests.
Current cost of meals is \$6.00. In addition to nutritional benefits, some social interaction.

MUSTARD SEED STREET CHURCH
625 Queens Avenue, Victoria, B.C., V8T 1L9 phone: 953-1575
Outreach: Mon-Fri 8am–4pm, Food bank: Mon, Wed, Fri 9:30am–2:30
Food bank is closed the week following welfare cheque day
Drop in for food, friendship, counseling, and crisis intervention.
Food hampers available. Restriction for clients to one visit per month.

OPEN DOOR SOCIETY
935 Pandora St, Victoria B.C., V8V 3P4 phone: 385-2454
5 am – 8 am, 10 am – 12 noon, 2 pm – 4 pm most Mondays to Fridays
Free peanut butter sandwiches, doughnuts, coffee, tea. Free bread, sometimes produce. Free clothing room, games room, counseling, and referrals.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY
828 View Street, Victoria B.C. V8W 1K2 phone: 382-0712
9 am–12:30 pm, 1:30 pm–4:30 pm Mon–Friday, Tues aft for Women
Must be 19 yrs, unless referred by parents, ASK, or Soc Services.
A variety of food, clothing, household items. Home visits, food vouchers for parents supporting children.

SAINT SAVIOUR'S KITCHEN
310 Henry Street, Church Hall (VicWest) phone: 384-8773
For women and children, Weds and Fris, 12 noon – 1:30 pm

How many wars?

Posted on http://pej.org by: Mike Wallace

Current, active military conflicts:

Algeria Insurgency 1992 -->
Angola Cabinda 1975 -->
Burma Insurgency 1950 -->
Burundi Civil Conflict 1993 -->
China Spratly Islands 1988 -->
Colombia Insurgencies 1970s -->
Congo (Zaire) Congo War 1998-->
Georgia Civil War 1991-->
India Assam 1985 -->
India Kashmir 1970s -->
India Naxalite Uprising 1967 -->
Indonesia Aceh 1986 -->
Indonesia Kalimantan 1983 -->
Indonesia Maluku 1999-2002
Indonesia Papua / West Irian 1963 -->
Israel Al-Aqsa Intifada 2000 -->
Ivory Coast Civil War 2002 -->
Korea Korean War 1953 -->
Liberia Civil War 1999 -->
Moldova Transdniester 1991-->
Namibia Caprivi Strip 1966-->
Nepal Maoist Insurgency 1996 -->
Nigeria Civil Disturbances 1997 -
Peru Shining Path 1970s -->
Philippines Moro Uprising 1970s-->
Russia Chechen Uprising 1992 -->
Somalia Civil War 1991-->
Spain Basque Uprising 1970s -->
Sri Lanka Tamil Uprising 1980s -->
Sudan Second Civil War 1983 -->
Thailand Islamic Insurgency 2001 -->
Uganda Civil Conflict 1980 -->
United States Afghanistan 1980 -->
United States Djibouti 2001 -->
United States Iraq 1990 -->
United States Philippines 1898 -->

For a total of 15 major wars and at least 20 "minor" armed conflicts.

Food Banks and Meals, con’t

SALVATION ARMY, Family Services and Counselling (singles, too)
2695 Quadra, at Hillside ph: 386-8521
Monday – Friday, 9 am – 3:30 pm
Emergency food hampers,, clothing & small housewares vouchers.

SIKH TEMPLE
Blackwood at Topaz (towards summit park), enter right side door
Every Sunday at noon - Free food serving, lentil dahl and chapatis, etc.

STREETLINK EMERGENCY SHELTER
1634 Store St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 1S2
phone: 384-3634, office 383-1951
Free dinner 7 days a week, 3 pm for meal ticket, serving at 3:30

UPPER ROOM SOCIETY
919 Pandora Avenue, Victoria, B.C., V8V 3P4
phone: 388-7112
Office Hrs: Mon-Fri 9am–4pm Meals: Mon-Sat 12-1pm, 4–5:30 pm
Meal pass costs \$26 a month, or \$1 at the door.

Poet's Corner

The Global End of Money

David Arthur Johnston

<http://www.angelfire.com/apes/hatrackman>

The future. More and more people are seeing the horror that we are adopting as the 'norm' and are not wanting to content themselves with it.

We, the people, are desperately seeking the inspiration that will lead us from a world seemingly gone mad while trying to hold on to our own sanities. Though we find we are addicted and our addiction feeds what harms us.

We understand that it will only be through unification that we can break free; though many (in their laziness) are convinced unification is impossible, hence despair.

In essence, we desperately want our 'individualism', though this seems a deception- that however 'individual' we think we are we still exist in the same existence. There has also been a very menaced and contrived promotion of pride- the lie that divides us. So these are things needing to be contended with.

At the root, the cure rests in a 'want of truth' that supercedes a 'fear of discomfort'. The way to bypass the defenses (fear and anger) built around our apprehensions is through humility; a simple understanding that when it is time to die that we will do so calmly- and from that understanding, everything. Through a want of truth we find that we are stronger than our fear and can respond however we will- that there is no trauma that we cannot handle.

The global end of money (which is inevitable) begins with the understanding that there is truth regardless of opinion. An understanding that love (a pervading appreciation of harmony) is real and that pride is an ignorance of it. An understanding that all things can only be what they are because they can only be their experiences- and through that acknowledgement, objective understanding of the absurdities of fear and anger- so through 'understanding' how to respond lovingly becomes more and more apparent. However grand a consideration is it cannot be too grand, for 'grandness' is only a term of comparison. Pride is a lie. Every time money is spent it is a lie that is being contented with. Through humility (a want of truth) we find unification; through an acknowledgment of our happiness being dictated to by love we find that there is nothing we cannot do to further that path, including ending the use of money.

It starts with those who've yet to take on many/any external responsibilities accepting the responsibility of being humble until they die- these are the ones that secure the 'tent cities'- and once the tent cities are secured those with other responsibilities (ex. family) can start moving in.

The near future has two types of people- those who move toward the end of money and those who hate them (who, through time, either find love's inspiration or they go insane and die, not understanding the nature of 'absolute forgiveness').

in knowing that the proud will find inspiration through being forgiven,
in knowing that humility owns courage,
in knowing true inspiration can only come through patience,
in absolute authority,

David Arthur Johnston
Victoria, BC, Canada



If Only

Kai Primeau

All of a sudden, there's no turning back.
All of a sudden, I'm on the wrong track.
All of a sudden, I break my back,
again,
again,
I don't know what to do
I feel like I should
I don't know what to do
I know that I would
If only....



Bread and Roses

James Oppenheim, 1911

As we come marching, marching, in the beauty of the day,
A million darkened kitchens, a thousand mill-lofts gray
Are touched with all the radiance that a sudden sun discloses,
For the people hear us singing, "Bread and Roses, Bread and Roses."

As we come marching, marching, we battle, too, for men --
For they are women's children, and we mother them again.
Our lives shall not be sweated from birth until life closes --
Hearts starve as well as bodies: Give us Bread, but give us Roses.

As we come marching, marching, unnumbered women dead
Go crying through our singing their ancient song of Bread;
Small art and love and beauty their drudging spirits knew --
Yes, it is bread we fight for -- but we fight for Roses, too.

As we come marching, marching, we bring the Greater Days --
The rising of the women means the rising of the race --
No more the drudge and idler -- ten that toil where one reposes --
But a sharing of life's glories: Bread and Roses, Bread and Roses.

About Street Newz

Building Bridges within our Downtown Community

Thank you for supporting STREET NEWZ.

The STREET NEWZ mission is to provide a voice, and income opportunities, for economically marginalized and/or socially disadvantaged people, at the same time offering employable skills training, increased self-esteem, confidence, and pride in accomplishments.

You can contribute to social change by supporting the STREET NEWZ coalition and vendors, and by reading information that informs you directly about poverty and homeless issues. Please consider purchasing another copy later in the month, for a friend.

STREET NEWZ is sold by licensed vendors who sign a code of conduct. They're provided some free copies each month, and pay \$.50 per copy thereafter. Your donations are appreciated.

STREET NEWZ welcomes written submissions including interviews, event reviews, cartoons, poetry, photographs, or artwork, but we can't guarantee everything will be published. We reserve the right to edit, and will not print anything libelous, racist, sexist, or homophobic. Letters sent to the editor are assumed to be for publication, must include phone number or email (for confirmation), and may be edited for length.

Opinions expressed in this newspaper are not necessarily those of STREET NEWZ, the editors, or publishers.

We're hoping STREET NEWZ will be a project of the Bread and Roses Collective, a non-profit currently awaiting provincial government approval.

STREET NEWZ is printed on 100% post consumer recycled paper with vegetable ink, at Horizon Publications (604-254-8840) in Vancouver.

Submissions and donations for Street Newz can be sent to Janine Bandcroft, c/o CEDCO Victoria, #201-531 Yates St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 1K7 250-360-0852

the logistics

Expenses	June	July	August
Print costs (approx)	800	800	800
Staff	1000	1000	1000
Digital Camera	394		
Contributions		100	100
Total	2194		
Revenue			
Cash Donations	1020	????	????
In-kind donations:			
CEDCO office	50	50	50
trade-in camera			
equipment	115		
Anticipated fm vendors	800	800	800
Total	1985		

Many thanks to Ted Bandcroft, Sheila and Bill Ede, Bob Ryder, Glen Davidson, the Open Door, CEDCO Victoria, and all the wonderful volunteers who are helping this newspaper evolve. Your contributions will help this newspaper exist into the future.

getting the word out

Are you connected to a local, community minded, socially responsible business or non-profit with an advertising budget? Our circulation is currently 2000, within Greater Victoria, and we anticipate growth.

Biz card size:
\$30/mth or \$150 for 6 mths (non-profit: \$25/ mth or \$125 for 6 mths)

1/4 page size:
\$60/mth or \$300 for six mths (non-profit: \$50/mth or \$250 for 6 mths)

1/2 page size:
\$100/mth or \$500 six mths (non-profit: \$75/mth or \$375 for six mths)

Contact Janine @ 360-0852 or streetnewz@cedco.bc.ca for more info.

Count me in!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province/State _____

Postal/Zip: _____

Ph/email: _____

Please make cheques payable to Janine Bandcroft, until we have the Bread and Roses non-profit society officially established. We're hoping that someday we'll be able to issue tax receipts!

For \$20 or more we'll mail each month's newz for a year.

Yes! Send me a copy by mail!

Please clip and mail to:
Janine Bandcroft
C/o CEDCO Victoria ***Thanks so much for your support!***
#201-531 Yates St.
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1K7

“There are no magic answers, no miraculous methods to overcome the problems we face, just the familiar ones: an honest search for understanding, education, organization, action ...”

Noam Chomsky